

The key to safe traveling in any area is situational awareness. Distractions because of luggage, children, hotel personnel, strangers, etc. can put you at risk. Know your surroundings and stay in control of every situation. Examine some things you can do to make your travel safe.

Never list your home address on the luggage tag. If on business, put the company's address on the tag. Use covered luggage tags as well.

Stay with your luggage until the luggage is checked. If you must put your bag down, keep one foot on the handle.

Carry important papers with you; NEVER check anything that you simply cannot afford to lose. Photocopy your passport, driver's license and credit cards.

Bring a small flashlight. You never know when you'll suddenly be "in the dark" and find yourself in unfamiliar surroundings. At night, keep your flashlight by your bed.

Make sure that your prescription medicines are filled *properly* and labeled *accurately*. In some countries certain prescription medicines are forbidden.

If detained for whatever reason by an official, ask for identification. If in doubt, tell them that you want to see his superior. Keep your emotions in check.

Bring along a basic first aid kit with bandages, iodine, mosquito repellant, sunscreen, alcohol packets, dramamine, pepto bismol, diarrhea medicine, etc.

Familiarize yourself with train and bus schedules before traveling. Have an alternate plan in place in the event your transportation plans change.

Do not discuss travel plans, your room number or any other personal information in public within earshot of strangers.

Do not flash your passport in public. Discreetly show important documents to officials only.

Never flash your money in public. Exchange funds with reputable and recognized exchangers only.

Never wear anything that projects affluence. No gold chains, expensive watches and rings, luggage, or other paraphernalia should be in easy view. **Better yet:** leave your jewelry at home. Do not wear name tags in public.

If possible travel with only one or two credit cards.

Only stay in a hotel that uses cards to open room doors and make sure your room has a peephole and a deadbolt lock. Secure the chain and secure the door by pushing a rubber stop under it.

Stay in a room near a stairwell. Never take the elevator if a fire or smoke is detected. Always stay in a hotel where the doors enter the hallway and not directly from the outside.

Do not use unmarked taxi cabs. Sit behind the driver so you can see him, but he cannot see you.

Back into your parking spaces to facilitate a quick exit. Park only in well lit and well traveled areas.

Have tips ready in advance for service personnel.

Vary your schedule; try not to come and go at the same time everyday.

If your cell phone does not work outside of the country, consider renting one that does for the duration of your trip.

Consider purchasing portable alarms that emit a loud sound.

Watch for scams on the street. Children working with adults are notorious as pickpockets.

Stay Safe!!!